# SPATIO-TEMPORAL ANALYSIS OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT IN GILGIT BALTISTAN, PAKISTAN

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#### ABSTRACT

This paper deals with the spatio-temporal analysis of tourism development and hospitality management in the Gilgit Baltistan region of Pakistan. The Gilgit Baltistan is one of the important tourist destinations which attract tourists from both inland and abroad owing to unique natural landscape. The contribution of hospitality management in terms of accessibility to destination and accommodation for the tourists is significant for tourism development. To strengthen the tourism activities in a region, distinctive hospitality services and temporal increase in tourists' inflow are inevitable. The temporal arrival of both the domestic and international tourists in the region is reasonable. The current research is carried out with the acquisition of secondary data with quantitative research approaches. The temporal inflow data of domestic and international tourists in the Gilgit Baltistan for last twenty one years (2000 - 2020) is obtained from concerned departments. To spatially analyze the hospitality services in the study area, the data of Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) services, registered hotels and guesthouses of all the ten districts of the Gilgit Baltistan is obtained. The statistical data of trekking and expedition parties in the region is also analyzed in this study. The results revealed that the facilities of hospitality management are comparatively highest in Hunza, Gilgit and Skardu districts while the Shiger and Kharmang districts of the Baltistan region direly needs investment in hospitality services. The inflow of domestic tourist is higher than international tourists and the arrival of trekking parties is more as compare to the expedition parties in the region.

KEYWORDS: Gilgit Baltistan, Hospitality Management, Temporal-Inflow, Tourism

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is swiftly nurturing and developing sector throughout the world in recognition of its share in uplifting the world economy (Sausmarez, 2007). The encouraging role of tourism sector in strengthening the economy of countries worldwide is obvious and palpable. The arrival of tourists in a country from different regions of the world positively contributes in many ways including the creation of employment opportunities for youth (Manzoor et al., 2019; Ahad, 2016). The development of tourism activities in a country not only benefits the economic surplus of the country rather it also uplifts the socio-economic stratification of local communities which

contribute as tourists' destination or resort (Eshliki & Kaboudi, 2012; Abbas et al., 2015). Tourism further provides opportunities of income, infrastructure development, large-scale private investment, acceleration in trade and beneficial investment for entrepreneurs in different services required for promotion of tourism (Arshad et al., 2018a).

Tourism and hospitality services manage accommodation for the tourists including families, groups and individuals along with the facilities of transportation to reach the destinations. Both the private and public transports are used in this regard. The provision of recreational and entertainment opportunities with access to the local brands is also considered essential during stay (Hwang & Lee, 2019). The affable and responsive services of accommodation, food and traveling within the tourist destinations where the services are required, collectively coined managed under Hospitality management (Ryan, 2015). The graciousness behavior of hospitality managers with the tourists and generosity in manner while rendering services make the hospitality services reliable (Usakli & Kucukergin, 2018). Hospitality management also contributes to present the positive image of locality with local population to the tourists, fulfill the needs and cares about their satisfaction to the services (Hays & Ozretic-Dosen, 2014). For incessant development of tourism sector, the intensifying role of hospitality and hotel management is significant. The investment in hospitality services is therefore considered a direct and beneficial investment for tourism services. The proportionality of tourism with hospitality services is consequently direct as hospitality management is an essential part of tourism services (Wang, 2016).

The temporal arrival of tourists in different regions of Pakistan is increasing in numbers as both the local and international tourists visit the tourist destinations with mounting statistics. The economic surplus and poverty reduction are two main benefits of enhancing tourism activities in Pakistan (Shahzad et al., 2017). The tourists' arrival can be increased in Pakistan by exploring the actual capacity of tourism in different regions and by providing favorable opportunities to the entrepreneurs for marketing of accommodation and travelling facilities required in tourism sector (Malik et al., 2010).

The Gilgit Baltistan is considered a prominent tourist destination both in Pakistan and world widely. The unusual landscape of the region gains attention of the nature enthusiast throughout the settlements of mankind (Arshad et al., 2018b). The sumptuousness and majestic natural sights in the Gilgit Baltistan attracts the tourists to observe the small mountainous valley, snowy mountains, meandering rivers of fresh glacial water and mountain locked lakes around the year (Hye & Khan, 2013). The multiple

types of tourists including both the domestic and international tourists visit the Gilgit Baltistan every year. This list also includes trekkers, mountaineers, climbers, and expedition groups (Rasul and Manandhar, 2009). The completion of the Karakuram Highway as the only route of accessibility to the remote mountainous belt of Pakistan, the Gilgit Baltistan escalated the tourism activities in the region. The physical landscape and anthropogenic local traits are two main tourists' attraction characteristics of this area (Fazlur-Rahman et al., 2013). Tourism in this region is considered as the basic livelihood source for the local residents following government jobs (Zain, 2010).

# 2. METHODS AND MATERIALS

# 2.1. The study area

The study area projected for the research, the 'Gilgit Baltistan' formerly known as northern areas of Pakistan is the northern most territory of Pakistan. Its absolute location is 32° 10' 0" to 37° 20' 0" N latitude and 72° 40' 0" to 80° 50' 0" E longitude (Figure 1). "It borders with Azad Jammu and Kashmir to the South, the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to the West, the Wakhan Corridor of Afghanistan to the North West, Xinjiang region of China to the North and North East and Jammu and Kashmir to the South East".



Fig. 1. Location map of Gilgit Baltistan, Pakistan

## 2.2. Research Methodology

The research methodology includes a roadmap to the researcher about the sequential tasks to be completed according to the research objectives. This research is based on quantitative data and analytical approach of research is used to analyze the data. The descriptive research approach is also used to extract results and to discuss the outcomes of statistical data according to the needs of the research. For this research, secondary data is obtained in two phases. In first phase, the data of temporal inflow of both the domestic and international tourists for twenty years (2000 - 2020) is obtained. For authentication and relevancy of temporal inflow of tourists, Ministry of Tourism, Sports and Culture GB, Directorate of Tourism GB and Police Department GB is accessed. In second phase of secondary data collection, the data related to hospitality management including registered hotels, guest houses, rest houses and PTDC (Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation) services are obtained from Directorate of tourism GB and relevant District administrations. The required data is analyzed statistically by using Excel worksheets to get the data of yearly differences, temporal fluctuation in inflow of tourists as well as to examine the percentage wise share of local and international tourists. The research objectives help the researchers to be consistent on specified research aims. This study is focused on analyzing the growth pattern of local and international tourists' inflow temporally in Gilgit Baltistan region during 2000 – 2020 Secondly this study attempted to explore the strengths and potentials of hospitality management in GB region.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1 discloses the temporal inflow of locals and foreigners as tourists in Gilgit Baltistan for the duration of 20 years from 2000 to 2020. Total number of tourists and percentage distribution of local and international tourists are also presented in the table. The table also reveals that the arrival of domestic tourists from the four provinces of Pakistan and Azad Kashmir is increasing temporally towards the Gilgit Baltistan. The numbers of local tourists that remained in thousands for many years with increasing trend has reached to millions. Due to the arrival of domestic tourists in million of numbers, the percentage of international tourists in the Gilgit Baltistan has decreased despite of improvement in number temporally.

The table further shows that in the year 2000 and 2002, the arrival of international tourists was high than the local tourists, that's why the percentage of international tourists reached 53% and 60% respectively. Beside these two years, the temporal inflow of domestic tourists dominated from for 18 years from 2000 to 2020. Till 2010, the percentage

of foreigners in the study area was more than 10% and also in the year 2012. From the year 2013 to 2020, the percentage of international tourists declined to less than 10% due to instigation in arrival of domestic tourists and this percentage persisted continuously 1% for last five years from 2016 to 2020. In the year 2018 and 2019, the temporal inflow of local tourists in the Gilgit Baltistan touched one million as 1391628 local tourists arrived in 2018 and 1023023 domestic tourists in 2019. From the year 2015, the trend of arrival of both the domestic and international tourists was increasing in the Gilgit Baltistan as the number increased temporally for the period (Table 1). The COVID – 19 pandemic, which affected the world at large scale, also disturbed the tourism sector due to worldwide ban on tourism activities and strict travelling instructions. The Gilgit Baltistan region also faced the same that's why 2020 was a worst year for the tourism sector.

Daitistaii 2000 - 2020							
Year	Local	International	Total	% of	% of		
	Tourists	Tourists	Arrival	locals	Foreigners		
2000	8976	10082	19058	47%	53%		
2001	15685	8708	24393	64%	36%		
2002	2000	2941	4941	40%	60%		
2003	5051	3001	8052	62%	38%		
2004	9191	3514	12705	72%	28%		
2005	9944	4994	14938	66%	34%		
2006	33218	4264	37482	88%	12%		
2007	23770	7050	30820	77%	23%		
2008	54040	7050	61090	88%	12%		
2009	54602	7728	62330	88%	12%		
2010	45300	7728	53028	85%	15%		
2011	61233	5242	66475	92%	08%		
2012	28893	4324	33217	87%	13%		
2013	51914	4501	56415	92%	08%		
2014	50304	3442	53746	93%	07%		
2015	200651	4082	204733	98%	02%		
2016	439685	4773	444458	99%	01%		
2017	781224	6212	787436	99%	01%		
2018	1391628	9027	1400655	99%	01%		
2019	1023023	10829	1033852	99%	01%		
2020	633246	1098	634344	99.8%	0.2%		

Table 1: Temporal inflow of local and international Tourists in GilgitBaltistan 2000 - 2020

**Source:** Tourism Department Gilgit Baltistan, 2020

Table 2 presents the total number of international tourists in Pakistan and the share of international tourists in the Gilgit Baltistan. The year wise difference of international tourists' arrival in GB is also calculated. This table negated the general public perception of the people of the Gilgit Baltistan that almost 50% or more international tourists in Pakistan visit the Gilgit Baltistan territory per year. The actual statistics are quite different according to the above table as the international tourists in the Gilgit Baltistan out of the total arrival of tourists in Pakistan are very low. For the year 2000 and 2001, only 1.8% and 1.7% international tourists out of total number of foreign tourists in Pakistan visited the Gilgit Baltistan. For more than 10 years this statistics remained less than 1% as the percentage continuously touched more or less than 0.5%. The fluctuation in temporal arrival is also observed with the increasing and decreasing number of international individual tourists. In the year 2000 and 2019, the arrival of international tourists in the Gilgit Baltistan figured more than 10,000 as in the year 2000 this figure was 10082 while there were 10829 foreigners in the study area in 2019. Beside these two years the number of international arrival couldn't touch the 10,000 figure from 2000 to 2020. To further strengthen tourism in the region, the percentage of international tourists out of total foreigners in Pakistan should rise.

	- 2020							
Year	Foreigners in Pakistan	International Tourists in GB	Year wise Difference in GB	Percentage of International Tourists in GB				
2000	557000	10082	-	1.8%				
2001	500000	8708	-1374	1.7%				
2002	498000	2941	-5767	0.5%				
2003	501000	3001	-60	0.5%				
2004	648000	3514	+513	0.5%				
2005	798000	4994	+1480	0.6%				
2006	898000	4264	-730	0.4%				
2007	840000	7050	+2786	0.8%				
2008	823000	7050	No change	0.8%				
2009	855000	7728	+678	0.9%				
2010	907000	7728	No change	0.8%				
2011	1161000	5242	-2486	0.4%				
2012	966000	4324	-918	0.4%				
2013	565212	4501	+177	0.8%				
2014	530000	3442	-1059	0.6%				

 Table 2: Total Arrival of foreigners in Pakistan and percentage in GB 2000

2015	563400	4082	+640	0.7%	
2016	965498	4773	+691	0.5%	
2017	1750000	6212	+1439	0.3%	
2018	1900035	9027	+2815	0.4%	
2019	3500000	10829	+1802	0.3%	
2020	-	1098	-9731	-	

**Source:** World Bank, 2020 for International tourists' inflow in Pakistan and Tourism Department GB, 2020 for international tourists in Gilgit Baltistan

Table 3 states the number of trekking parties in the Gilgit Baltistan with total number of members, tour guides engaged and low or high porters indulged from 2010 to 2020. The trekking groups visit the Gilgit Baltistan from different regions of the world as part of adventure tourism to strengthen tourism in the region. The great mountain ranges; "Karakuram, Himalaya and Hindukush" along with the Pamir knots and Passu Cones contribute generously for the development of adventure tourism in the region through rough, steep and arduous tracks for trekking to the adventure tourists. The trekking to the base camps of peaks with the height of more than 8000 meters including K2, Nanga Parbat, Gashebrum I, Broad Peak and Gashebrum II are known worldwide. These trekking routes provide seasonal employment to thousands of locals as tour guides and porters.

According to the statistics of the above table, 154 trekking parties containing 578 members visited the Gilgit Baltistan in 2010. The concerned tour operators engaged 154 registered tour guides and 1618 low porters this year to facilitate the trekkers within the specified route. Regarding trekking parties, the year 2011 hosted nine trekking parties less than the previous year but the total members increased this year as compared to the last year. Moreover, 154 trekking parties with 723 members arrived in the Gilgit Baltistan and for their services 145 tour guides 2111 low porters were employed. In year 2012, the highest number of trekking parties reached the study area for trekking on different routes with 767 individual members. For the highest number of expedition parties, 175 tour guides and 2066 low porters gave their services. The above table further revealed that 136 trekking parties joined the same list in the year 2013 with 565 team members and 1570 low porters and 140 tour guides provided their services to facilitate them during their adventure. After 2013, the number of trekking parties started decreasing as for consecutive three years this number remained less than hundred. Even in the year 2015, the trekking parties in the Gilgit Baltistan were lowest both in terms of groups and members. Only 64 trekking parties with 209 group members trekked in the region to strengthen adventure tourism (Table 2).

The number of trekking parties started increasing after 2016, as the number of trekking parties in the Gilgit Baltistan figured 130 or more till the COVID – 19 pandemic. In the year 2018 and 2019, the tour operators in the study area hosted 912 members, the highest members for last eleven years and 906 trekking members, the second highest according to the table respectively. 158 tour guides and 2232 low porters cooperated with the tour operators to accomplish the tours in 2018 as well as 152 tour guides and 2388 low porters rendered their services in the year 2019. The COVID – 19 pandemic confined the adventure tourism in Gilgit Baltistan due to strict travelling orders world widely and also because of official ban on entrance of tourists by the GB government. The actual data for the year 2020 is not provided by the concerned department because the data is not finalized yet.

Year	Trekking	Total	Total	Port	ers indulged
	Parties	members	Guides	High Porter	Low Porter
2010	154	578	154	0	1618
2011	145	723	145	0	2111
2012	170	767	175	0	2066
2013	136	565	140	0	1570
2014	99	447	99	0	1237
2015	64	209	64	0	653
2016	98	473	98	0	1386
2017	130	675	132	0	1747
2018	157	912	158	0	2232
2019	153	906	153	1	2388
2020	-	-	-	-	-

Table 3: Trekking Parties in Gilgit Baltistan 2010 - 2020

**Source:** Tourism Department Gilgit Baltistan, 2020

Table 4 explains the detail of expedition parties in the Gilgit Baltistan with exact number of members and statistic of low and high porters indulged to carry the required expedition items and accommodation's materials to the base camps. The expedition parties visit the Gilgit Baltistan region especially Shiger district of Baltistan division and Diamer district of Gilgit division to expedite the peaks having height of more than 8000 meters which are also known as "Eight thousanders" throughout the world. K2 (8,611 m), the highest peak of Pakistan and Nanga Parbat (8,126 m), the second highest peak of Pakistan are the two main peaks among the "Eight thousanders".

According to table of expedition parties in GB, 18 parties visited the Gilgit Baltistan with 132 expedition members in 2011. The number of expedition parties increased in 2012 with the enhancement of nine expedition parties and 26 more members than the previous year. In the year 2013, the expedition parties decreased in the Gilgit Baltistan as total parties visited were 17 with 123 expedition members. This number is third lowest number in last ten years in terms of arrival of both expedition parties and members. In the year 2014, the Gilgit Baltistan hosted 26 parties of expedition with 171 members. This year six high and 1102 low porters were indulged for required services to accomplish the expedition.

The arrival of members and expedition parties increased in 2015 as 29 parties containing 259 total members tried their best to expedite the "eight thousanders" of Gilgit Baltistan. Regarding arrival of expedition members the 259 individuals are the second largest figure in last ten years. 26 high porters and 1261 low porters rendered their services to the expedition parties through different tour operators this year. 28 and 34 expedition parties with the members of 184 and 217 entered the Gilgit Baltistan for expedition in the year 2016 and 2017 respectively. In 2016, the number of high porters indulged was 26 while there were 789 low porters. In 2017, the high porters were 36 and low porters were 993. The year 2018 was best year for expedition tourism in the Gilgit Baltistan as both the expedition parties and number of members was highest. 37 expedition parties with 260 members attempted expedition this year. The services of porters also maximized same year as 48 high porters and 1142 low porters were engaged by the tour operators. In 2019, the arrival of expedition parties in the Gilgit Baltistan sharply decreased as only 12 parties with 68 members arrived for expedition and to render services to them only seven high porters and 232 low porters were employed. In the year 2020, due to COVID - 19 pandemic the tourism sector experienced digression in all kind of tourism including expedition and the actual data is also missing due to unavailability of finalized data.

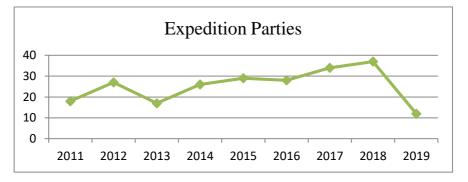


Fig. 2. Expedition Parties in GB 2011 - 2019

Year	<b>Expedition Parties</b>	Total	Porters service					
	members		<b>High Porter</b>	Low Porter				
2011	18	132	-	-				
2012	27	158	-	-				
2013	17	123	-	-				
2014	26	171	6	1102				
2015	29	259	26	1261				
2016	28	184	26	789				
2017	34	217	36	993				
2018	37	260	48	1142				
2019	12	68	7	232				
2020	-	-	-	-				

Table 4: Expedition Parties in Gilgit Baltistan 2011 - 2020
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Source: Tourism Department Gilgit Baltistan, 2020

Table 5 describes the capacity of hospitality management facilities in Gilgit Baltistan focusing the hotels, guest houses, rest houses and PTDC accommodations. Both the private and public sector hospitality services of all the three divisions Gilgit, Baltistan and Diamer are mentioned in the table with actual number of available rooms to accommodate the local and international tourists. In GB region, Gilgit Division, Baltistan Division and Diamer Division respectively have the maximum number of accommodation facilities for the tourists in terms of guest houses, rest houses and hotels and also according to the availability of different categories of rooms.

### 3.1. Hospitality management in Gilgit division

In Gilgit Division, the maximum numbers of hospitality facilities are offered by Hunza district where the private sector rocks with 203 hotels and guest houses. There are only four public rest houses of different government departments and these guest houses are not available for general tourists. The Gilgit district is also following Hunza in this list with 131 hotels and guest houses with 1915 rooms of all the required categories for the tourism services. There is no government rest house in the Gilgit district according to the above table. All the 131 hospitality management is owned by private sector. There are 40 and 31 hotels or guest houses in Nagar and the Ghizer districts respectively. The number of rest houses of different government departments is most in the Ghizer district in Gilgit Division as there are 11 guest houses. The numbers of PTDC rooms are also high in numbers in Hunza district with 52 rooms, following the Gilgit district and Ghizer district with 44 and 24 rooms correspondingly (Table 5; Figure 3).

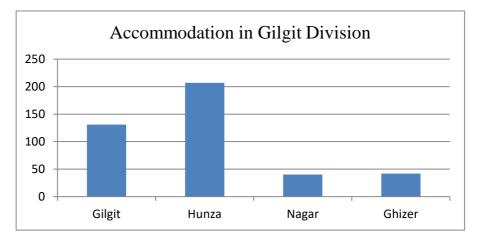


Fig. 3. Accommodations in Gilgit division

## 3.2. Hospitality management in Baltistan division

In the Baltistan division, the number of registered hotels and guest houses with the Directorate Tourism GB in Skardu district is 116 which is the highest number. There are eight rest houses in Skardu district which is owned by different government departments. District Ganche is following Skardu district in numbers of accommodation infrastructure as there are 30 registered guest houses and hotels which are rendering services in tourism sector. The numbers of rest houses under the supervision of different government departments are highest in Ganche district in Baltistan Division as there are 11 guest houses. The facility of hospitality services is discouraging in Shiger district despite tourism hub for adventure tourism and mountaineering. There are only three hotels in Shiger district owned by private sector and only four government rest houses. The rest houses are mainly managed by Works department GB. The situation of hospitality services is worst in Kharmang district as there is no registered guest house or hotel in the district and only four rest houses of government departments are there which are not for general tourists. The mountainous natural waterfalls of Kharmang district are visited by thousands of tourists in tourism season. PTDC services are also confined to Skardu and Ganche districts in Baltistan Division with 40 and 12 rooms respectively (Table 5; Figure 4).

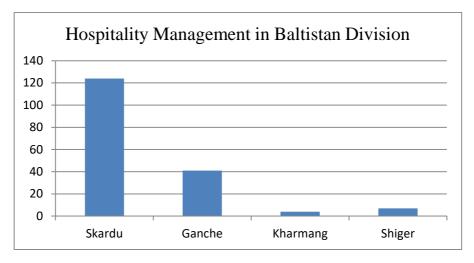


Fig. 4. Hospitality capabilities in Baltistan region

## 3.3. Hospitality management in Diamer division

In the Diamer division there are only two districts, Diamer and Astore. According to Hotel survey of 2020 under Directorate of Tourism GB, there are 47 registered guest houses and hotel in Diamer district which are rendering services for tourism activities along with 17 government rest houses. In the Astore district, 27 private hospitality centers are there and different government departments own 10 rest houses in proximity of well-known tourist destinations. The PTDC services are only rendered in the Astore district in this administrative division and there are 12 rooms in PTDC building (Table 5).

		•••				0
Division	Districts	Hotels / Guest Houses / Rest Houses			Total Rooms	PTDC Rooms
		Private	Public	Total	_	
Baltistan	Skardu	116	08	124	1248	40
	Ganche	30	11	41	213	12
	Kharmang	00	04	04	12	No
						service
	Shiger	03	04	07	11	No
						service
Gilgit	Gilgit	131	00	131	1915	44
	Hunza	203	04	207	2484	52
	Nagar	40	00	40	360	No

#### Table 5: Accommodation (Hospitality) capacity for tourists in GB region

						service
	Ghizer	31	11	42	322	24
Diamer	Diamer	47	17	64	723	No
						service
	Astore	27	10	37	324	12

**Source:** Tourism Department Gilgit Baltistan (Hotel Survey, 2020)

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Tourism and hospitality management is part and parcel as the main services needed for a tourist to reach the destination and the facilities at accommodation is rendered through hospitality management. The Gilgit Baltistan as a natural destination for tourism activities is preferred by both the domestic and international tourists. The mountainous natural landscape of the region attracts the attention of large number of tourists from both inside and outside of Pakistan. The arrival of trekking parties and expedition parties authenticate the capacity of adventure tourism in the region. The tourism is rapidly flourishing and developing sector in the Gilgit Baltistan in terms of tourists' inflow and involvement of local population in hospitality services. During the last two decades the arrival of domestic and international tourists in the region perked up temporally as the statistic of local tourists crossed 1.3 millions in a single year and for the international tourists this figure increased reached highest number 10829 in 2019. The percentage of domestic tourists in the region is much more than the foreigners as out of the total tourists the percentage of international tourists remained less than 10% for more than ten years from 2000 to 2020. The temporal inflow pattern of both the tourists, local and international in the study area is not uniform because there is fluctuation in temporal arrival. Both the increasing and decreasing pattern is obvious for last twenty years. Same pattern is also observed in temporal arrival of expedition and trekking parties. The continuous sectarian violence in the Gilgit region for many years in the beginning of the century and couple of terrorist attacks on foreigners are the main reason behind the fluctuation in temporal inflow of tourists in the study area. The percentage of international tourists in the Gilgit Baltistan out of the total international tourists in Pakistan is very low as the percentage persisted between 0% and 1% for almost all the twenty years. The large difference in this list year wise is also apparent because of rise and fall in numbers. The accommodation and hospitality facilities in the Gilgit Baltistan has been increased in last twenty years and due to enhancement of tourism activities in the region the involvement of local investors is increasing to render hospitality services through hotels, guest houses and travelling means. The accommodation capacity to facilitate the tourists in all the

three administrative divisions of the region including Gilgit, Baltistan and Diamer is encouraging. The private sector has largely contributed to strengthen the hospitality management in the Gilgit Baltistan. Thus, the development of tourism and hospitality management in the Gilgit Baltistan is encouraging. For the development of tourism sector in the region, the role of hospitality industry is preeminent. All the three administrative divisions of the region have contributed towards progress of tourism activities and the facilities of accommodation through hospitality services are also manageable throughout the Gilgit Baltistan region.

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